JWAN IMA:

THE WOMAN OF LOVE

Memorial Sketch

OF

ISABĒLLA D. LYALL

MISSIONARY OLD CALABAY

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Gift of SIMON OTTENBERG

To Aunt Janet from Alexander.

"Dear friend of my healt, the parted for we be, this little book I send to thee, that you may know my thoughts revent To scenes ingraven on my heart, And to those bright and happy days I spent by Catine's bonnie brass. And if on earth we meet no more Well still be friends on y on d'er shore"



NWAN IMA: THE WOMAN OF LOVE



with warmest love of affectuate Ira Gall

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ISABELLA D. LYALL MISSIONARY, OLD CALABAR

BY

JESSIE HOOD

EDINBURGH
ROBERT R. SUTHERLAND, HADDINGTON PLACE
1892



In Memoriam,

ISA. D. LYALL.

Belovèd friend! she earned her Lord's "Well done." Her loving labour now has its reward.

Leal heart! that throbbed to help poor Efik's race; Her hand outstretched with pitiful regard,

Led them to see the Saviour's marrèd face,

And showed them how their heaven had been won.

A consecrated life, a death full calm,

With smiling greeting as to best loved friend

She went to God, and found in Him the balm

For all her pain, eternity to spend

With waiting husband, kindred gone before,

And Jesus whom she served. Breathing faint breath

She sighed and whispered, satisfied in death,
"To Thee, my Lord, I come for evermore."

J. F. HOGG.





PREFACE.

THE interest which has been awakened in recent years, in all the Churches, on behalf of Missions, is one of the most pleasing features in the Church-life of the present day, and one full of hopeful encouragement for the future. To a larger extent perhaps than at any former period, the Church of Christ in all its sections has felt the Missionary impulse, and is endeavouring, with some measure of success, to carry out her Lord's parting command to go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. The providence of God has opened up everywhere fields of labour for the Missionary, and removed obstacles out of the way, so that the way has been cleared for the Church to enter and take possession of the world for Christ. Nowhere does this hold

more true than with regard to the whole Continent of Africa, which is now no longer an unknown land, but has been explored from side to side, and teeming populations discovered in it, waiting and ready for the preaching of the Gospel: justifying and enforcing the well-known saying of Livingstone, that "the end of the geographical feat is the beginning of the Missionary enterprize." The United Presbyterian Church has long felt the claims of Africa and the African race upon her missionary sympathies and labours; and first among the Negro-slave population of Jamaica, and afterwards in Old Calabar, on the west coast of Africa, in addition to her other missions, she has been labouring for more than half a century to bring the blessings of the Gospel to the ignorant and degraded children of Ham.

The subject of the Memorial Sketch of this volume, along with her husband, early felt their sympathies awakened to the claims of African

Missions; and in connection with the Baptist Missionary Society laboured with great zeal and success at Cameroons, on the West African coast. After her husband's early and lamented death, Mrs. Lvall. still following out her consecration for the wellbeing of the African race to which she had devoted herself, offered her services to the Mission Board of the United Presbyterian Church for the Zenana work which was needed at their stations at Old Calabar. Her offer was accepted, and how nobly and successfully she laboured for the good both of the bodies and the souls of those to whom she had access in the mission stations there, is told with graphic and sympathetic pen in this Memorial Sketch by her friend and biographer, Miss Hood, and also by her fellow-worker in the mission-field, Miss Hogg.

I feel honoured, in writing these few prefatory words, in being associated even in the slightest

manner with the publication of a life so noble and so consecrated. It is hoped that the wide circulation of the record of a service so loving and so devoted will deepen the interest of its readers in the cause to which Mrs. Lyall consecrated herself. It is the desire of the writer of the Memorial Sketch that any profits resulting from the sale of the Memoir should be devoted to the Mission at Old Calabar.

DAVID CAIRNS.

United Presbyterian Manse, Stitchel, October 1892.

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NWAN IMA: THE WOMAN OF LOVE.

CHAPTER I.

DAWN.

"Better to stem with heart and hand The roaring tide of life than lie Unmindful, on its flowery strand Of God's occasions drifting by."

BROWN shadows gathered thickly around the opening years of little Bella Renwick's life, yet now and again rays of sunshine light up her path. As the mists roll away, we catch a glimpse of a childish form hastily entering a cottage door, and gently slipping her hand into that of her friend good Jeanie Knox, saying:

"Will you take me with you to the Meetin', Jeanie?"

Gladly Jeanie complied with the child's request; and not that Sunday only, but again and again Bella accompanied her old friend from their home in Harrietsfield, Berwickshire, to the United Presbyterian Church at Stitchel.

There she met from time to time many Godfearing women—notably amongst them old Helen Renwick, her mother's aunt—who were deeply interested in the cause of missions, and especially in the work carried on by Mrs. Sutherland, Old Calabar. How little did these Christian women anticipate, that in after years this gentle, delicate little girl was so bravely and earnestly to take up Mrs. Sutherland's work in that far distant land when she had passed away to her rest and reward!

Bella, poor child, was early burdened with household cares. Left as a little maid in her grandfather's house, with the charge of two young children and the household work during the day depending on her, the neighbours tell how the child toiled early and late, and on washing-days might be seen mounted on a stool by the hedgeside laying out the clothes to dry.

What wonder that sometimes the Sunday morning work was heavy, and Bella, after finishing her task, needed to hurry after the band of country folks who were wending their way up Stitchel Brae.

"But why are you alone, Bella?" you say; "why have you left your own friends?"

It may be no answer would have been forthcoming then, save the deepening colour on the sweet child's face, and a wistful glance from the dreamy grey eyes. But in after years she tells how, amid the encircling gloom of her early years, she longed to cast in her lot with those who she thought had passed through the wicket-gate and were hasting onward to the heavenly city.

Yes, the Unseen Hand was leading her to church and Bible class, where the seed of the Word would be faithfully sown, which in due time was to spring up and bring forth such an abundant harvest.

Another picture we have of her as a child sitting in a farmyard, the centre of a group of children.

Draw near softly and listen to the tale that falls from her lips. Who is it she speaks of but the Friend of little children, and the Way to the land of light!

At length childhood's years have passed, and we see her standing on the threshold taking up the burden of life. Let us lift the curtain and take a peep at Bella as she bends over her work.

Stitch, stitch, stitch, and the glancing needle flew to and fro as a pensive youthful face bending over her work seemed striving to rid herself thus of distracting thoughts. But it would not do. By and by the nervous grasp relaxed, the work fell to the floor, and the dreamy grey eyes gazed wistfully out of the window.

"Why, what has come over you to-day, Bella?" said her companion, turning towards her; "you seem troubled about something."

But Bella made no response to this kindly query, and again stooping over her work, the click, click of her needle was heard as she sent it flying along.

"Bella, was it something you heard in Langton Church yesterday that is distressing you?" persisted her friend. "What was Mr. Logan preaching about?"

"The Great White Throne," said Bella, and now her eyes were clouded with tears, and an unspoken question was trembling on her lips.

"I was thinking the Word had struck home. I am glad to see you taking heed to those things," said her friend, turning away, and never noting the wistful, pleading glance Bella turned towards her.

"Oh, if she would only speak to me," thought Bella, "and make things plain, for I do not understand how to come to Christ!"

But she did not speak, and so the opportunity was lost.

Time passed on. Bella's anxieties were allayed. "Just on the threshold," yet she had not entered in.

Down by the burnside the primroses were peeping from their leafy shade, the golden celandine was already opening its star-like blossoms to the sun, and nature was awakening from her winter's sleep, but it was yet winter in the heart of Bella.

Day dawn was at hand, however, and the chill mists of carelessness and indifference were soon to be dispersed before the clear shining of the Sun of Righteousness.

Special evangelistic services are being held in Greenlaw, and Bella we find wending her way through the street of the moorland village to the place of meeting.

And so she listened to the "old, old story," but not as of yore. It only dreamily sounded in her ears as a pleasant tale. Then the address

closed, and the speaker's voice was raised in song.

In plaintive, quavering tones the old man sang:

"We know there's a bright and a glorious home Away in the heavens high, Where all the redeemed shall with Jesus dwell: Will you be there and I?"

The arrow had found its mark and rankled in the heart of Bella.

"Will you be there and I?"

"No, no," she said to herself, "I know I am not going there."

Intensely preoccupied, she was on her homeward way, brooding, ever brooding of the burden on her spirit.

Again and again had she heard the same evangel from the lips of her own minister, the Rev. John Fairbairn, but to-night it seemed a new revelation to her.

Neither peace nor rest did the night bring to Bella, but ever through the silent watches did she hear the plaintive voice quavering,

"Will you be there and I?"

Next evening saw her pressing forward, oh so eagerly, longing to find rest to her weary spirit.

"I must find Him to-night," she breathed as the service began. No need to ask who He was. "I would see Jesus" was her one prayer.

But yet again the meeting closed, and she had not found Him.

Almost in despair she turned to a Christian, ripe in years, who was passing down the street before her.

He tried to throw light on her path by giving his own experience, but this only seemed to make the darkness deeper than ever.

"No, no," she said sorrowfully, "I have never felt like that, so I cannot be on the way at all."

The last evening had come, the services were closing, and was the weary heart to turn away, disappointed, seeking but not finding?

On her companions the light had dawned. So simple it was, just taking Him at His word, yet Bella was still groping in darkness.

"No, I cannot see it," moaned the poor girl. And then she whispered to herself, "Yes, they will be there, but not I." The speaker's voice broke the silence.

"The Lord Jesus says, 'Behold, I stand at the door and knock.' He stands waiting at the door of your hearts. Let us engage in silent prayer, and it may be some heart-door will be opened for the Lord of glory to enter in."

Every head was bowed, and in the silence the call came to Bella:

"My child, may I come in?"

"Surely through her tears she saw God softly drawing near."

One touch of His finger and the cloud rolled away. Bella too saw that it was just to "take Him at His word."

"May I come in?"

"Yes, Lord," is the glad response, and that night all along the homeward way Bella saw no one "save Jesus only."

Now she knows that "Away in the heavens high," in the "Bright and glorious home," she too will be there to join in the glad song of the redeemed.

CHAPTER II.

SERVICE.

"She held the pitcher, stooping low, To lips of little ones below."

BELLA had been on the mountain-top, and now there was work for her down in the valley.

From her own lips so sweetly, so utterly void of self-consciousness, did the story of how the Lord sought and found her fall. And as the Master took her hand and led her along life's way, such blessed times of communion she had with Himself, it seemed almost as if she had entered within the veil.

In the workroom of the village dressmaker, where she plied her busy hand, things of time and sense passed away, and as at the first she saw no one save "Jesus only."

"I think," she said when telling us her experience, "the Lord knew what a troubled way He meant to lead me through, and thus He strengthened me for the journey." "True love flows forth in service," and Bella, her heart aglow and eager to show her gratitude to Him who had given His life for her, sought to be used as an instrument in her Master's hands. The harvest-field lay before her, but the sickle needed sharpening. Again and again, as the record of her life unfolds itself, do we see how the Hand of Affliction educated her for the work that awaited her. She learned

"To wait the appointed time for work appointed,
Lest by the tempter's wiles she'd be ensnared,
Fresh was the oil wherewith she was anointed;
Thus God prepared her for the work prepared."

And in the waiting-time Bella was not idle; the daily bread must be earned. In town or country where one door closed we see another opening to her hand. None could say of her, whether as dressmaker, sewing-maid, or shop girl, that she ate the bread of idleness.

Through it all she never lost sight of the "Higher Service." The education she had received at the village school did not satisfy her; pressing eagerly forward, a polished blade she would be, which renders the most effective service wielded by the Master's Hand.

Even at this early period of her life she tells us how her soul yearned over the poor benighted heathen. She longed to help them, oh so eagerly, but her way seemed hedged in.

Still there were souls perishing at her door. Those she could reach, and gathering around her the little children, she sought to bring them to Jesus.

We remember one of her scholars telling us of the Sunday school she taught in the little thatched cottage at Fogo Muir. The impression left on the girl's mind was the wonderful power in prayer with which her teacher was endued.

Sometimes we think how wonderful it will be to read our life's story in the light of the upper sanctuary. What is so dark and mysterious here will then shine forth clear as the noonday. And yet even here, looking back on the vanished years, we can trace the guiding hand of a loving Friend and Father.

We have seen Bella waiting at a closed door, and wondering it may be why the precious hours found her still standing there. Even as she waited, prayerfully, patiently waited, the door was inch by inch yielding on its hinges, until at last in the Master's good time it was flung open wide.

Our first glimpse of the little maiden was eagerly hasting up Stitchel Brae to the old Meeting-House, where the servant of God held the cup of living water to her lips. Here it was also while listening to an address on Missions by the late Mrs. Sutherland, of Old Calabar, that the desire awoke in her heart to join the Missionary band and tell her poor suffering sisters on the dark Continent the story of her Redeemer's love.

At first the thought seemed to her but an idle dream; but with her years it grew, ever deepening until the way was made plain to her, and she entered on service in the foreign field.

The Guide who had led her hitherto saw the path was too rough for her to tread unprotected, so not alone was she to set forward on the work.

Here we will take a glance at one who was to be her companion for a few brief years of wedded life.

We hear of David Lyall as attending the parish

school, Greenlaw, in the year 1869. Then a lad of fourteen or fifteen years of age, he seems to have been bent on fun and frolic. But a change was at hand. One evening in May we find him entering the Free Church schoolroom, where evangelistic services were being held, with a smile on his lips.

"What brings that laddie Lyall here to laugh?" said one neighbour to another as the meeting closed, and they hastened homewards.

But was he laughing now? One glance at the boy's face tells another tale. The finger of God had touched him, had broken the stony heart, had lifted the veil and given him a sight of himself.

No comfort could he find there. In vain two earnest Christian workers pointed him to the Saviour waiting to receive him. But as yet he did not see beyond his sins.

He went home, but not to rest.

Down in the cellar of his mother's public-house he wrestled with God for a blessing, and there in the solemn midnight watches the Lord revealed Himself as one mighty to save.

His friend writes of him thus: "From the time of his conversion he seemed never to have a doubt of his acceptance with God. His was a sunny nature and a trustful one, and his whole life was a continual example of Ps. exlix."

His motto now seemed to be, "To me to live is Christ," and literally he obeyed the injunction, "Is any merry? let him sing psalms." Early and late his voice was heard singing praises to Him who had redeemed him.

"Is it David you want?" said his mother to a friend who called for him. "If you cannot see him you will soon hear him," referring to this habit of the singing pilgrim.

"What's the news?" is a query we often hear on our country roads; and how heartily David would sing in reply we can well imagine:

> "Oh, I have got good news to tell, My Jesus has done all things well, Has rescued me from death and hell, That's the news! that's the news!"

"Lord, what wouldst Thou have me to do," was his earnest prayer, and when the hand of God showed the way of duty to run counter to his parents' wishes, he faithfully lifted the cross.

"But, David," remonstrated a friend, "you are disobeying your parents."

"I cannot help it, sir," the youth replied modestly but firmly; "the Word says, 'He that loveth father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me.'"

After leaving school he was apprenticed to a joiner in Hume, a village about three miles from Greenlaw.

Here in the evenings, when the sound of hammer, saw, and plane were stilled, the voice of David would be heard pleading with his fellows to be reconciled to God.

One who befriended him in after years, Mr. Ranken of Stenmuir, writes: "On one occasion shortly after we had become acquainted, he asked me if I would allow him an opportunity of holding a meeting in my kitchen. I consented, as I dared not damp his zeal, although I was a little doubtful how far this was prudent. I was present, however, and was greatly pleased with his simple and unaffected address.

"No tendency to exalt self or distinguish himself as

a speaker, but simply and entreatingly he told the saving story of the cross. From that day I was convinced he had received a Divine call to preach the gospel. There is one thing which I have omitted to notice, and that was his unceasing prayerfulness. He really obeyed to the letter the command, 'Pray without ceasing.'"

Another friend relates how the consistent Christian life of David and his earnest appeals were the means of drawing him to the Saviour; and after the lapse of twenty years, these early days were so vividly recalled to mind that he tells with graphic touch how, after one of these meetings in the carpenter's shop, returning home with his friend, they knelt together on the public road and returned thanks to Him who had delivered a soul from death.

At the close of his four years' apprenticeship in Hume, some Christian friends sent him out as an evangelist in the southern counties of Scotland. Notably amongst those was the late Mr. G. Logan, Hume Hall, an earnest Christian farmer, and one who openly identified himself with the cause of Christ.

David, seeing his work as an evangelist owned and blessed of God, turned his thoughts to the ministry.

Previous to this, during the first years of his converted life he had been thrown into contact with the Plymouth Brethren, and at this time was immersed; but shortly afterwards, taking exception to some of their tenets, he severed connection with them, and we next hear of him seeking admission to Spurgeon's Pastors' College.

He knew that he required to be equipped for service. The enemy was strong, and if the fort must be taken it needed the armour to be burnished and the blade to be keen. The Lord worked, but He worked through human instrumentality. Intellect, heart, hand, all must be prepared, educated, ready for use. But slowly, surely, step by step the village artizan worked his way upwards.

A few extracts from his diary, written during his student life in London, will show how ardently he longed after greater attainments in the spiritual life.

On the first page we have this prayer:

"Lord, help me to live so that my life may glorify Thee."

"1875. August 5th. Left Dumfries with the last train on my way to London for college. Seeking more of the immediate presence of Jesus Himself."

"August 16th. Hearing Moody and Sankey at the Tabernacle. A royal day for us. Jesus present."

"August 27th. Received lessons to-day on Cole's Divine Sovereignty. Very low in Divine life—longing for higher."

"May 2nd. Preaching in street this afternoon, the first time in London. The Lord make me holy."

"May 11th. Preaching in the street to-night twice. Struggling against the power of sin. Longing for more of the Saviour's presence, and aspiring to a holier life."

Then in the midst of arduous study we see his heart keeps warm to his "ain country-side," and we find him arranging for a camp-meeting at Hume.

"May 27th. Wrote in regard to camp-meeting to Lord Polwarth, Dr. Cairns, and G. Melrose, Kelso."

"June 14th. Met Sandy from Greenlaw. Still undecided for Christ. Promised to meet me on Sunday, for the purpose of going to hear Mr. Spurgeon."

"August 7th. Very much lamenting my cold and formal state. Looking back on my past life, I am almost ashamed of it. So little of the vital power of God in it. Let me always triumph in Christ."

"Sept.17th. Good news from Fogo Muir—a hamlet near Greenlaw—souls pressing into the kingdom. Rev. J. Millar from Duns is holding meetings there with very marked success."

At the close of his college career he received and accepted a call to a Baptist congregation in Odiham, Hampshire.

There for one year he earnestly and faithfully discharged his duties as a pastor, but all the while we see he has longings after life in the foreign field.

In his diary for 1879 we find the following entry: "May 20th. My birthday. Dedicated myself to God and mission work afresh."

In July of the same year his heart's desire is fulfilled, for we find him accepted as missionary to the Cameroons region, West Africa.

This mission was formed by the Baptist Missionary Society in 1840. Planting a settlement in Fernando

Po, they increased their staff by volunteers from the West Indies, who had been acclimatized to the tropical regions.

The pioneers of the mission, Mr. Clarke and Dr. Prince, visited England, stirred up fresh missionary zeal in the churches, and as a result of their appeal four clergymen and their wives offered their services. Amongst others were Alfred Saker and his worthy partner, who were henceforth identified with the cause of the Cameroon Mission.

"Take it all in all," writes Dr. Livingstone of this devoted man—"take it all in all, specially having regard to its many-sided character, the work of Alfred Saker at Cameroons and Victoria is, in my judgment, the most remarkable on the African coast."

A most interesting account of his Life and Work has been published by the Baptist Missionary Society, to whom we are indebted for the following details.

In 1845, leaving the island of Fernando Po, he took up his position in Ak'wa town, a village about twenty miles up the Cameroons river, and there he

laboured for thirty-seven years. 'Mid many discouragements he worked unceasingly through storm and sunshine, striving to break the fetters with which the poor Africans were bound; his last words, "For Thou art with me," being the golden thread which ran through his life-work, and the source of all his strength.

He it was who wrote a vocabulary of the Duallo dialect, and afterwards translated and printed the Holy Scriptures, revising and reprinting as his knowledge of the language increased.

At length, with his constitution ruined and emaciated to a shadow, he reached his native shore to find a last resting-place.

It is at this point that we find the connecting link between him and David Lyall.

Speaking to Mr. Spurgeon of his anxiety regarding the future of the Cameroons Mission, Mr. Saker expressed a fear that in the absorbing interest which the Congo Mission created, the labourer should be draughted off from the former field.

"I know the very man for you," said the Pastor of the Tabernacle encouragingly, in his own enthusiastic manner, and forthwith introduced Mr. Saker to the subject of this sketch.

Let us now glance backwards to the opening months of Bella Renwick's conversion, and we find at many of the evangelistic meetings she then attended David Lyall took part in the services, and from that time an intimacy seems to have sprung up between them.

Brief notices we have of their correspondence in the diary already referred to, closing with—

"1879. October 24th. Married this afternoon at 5 p.m. in Mr. Cunningham's manse. Took 7 train to Perth."

- "November 20th. Left for Liverpool."
- "November 21st. Mr. Saker and Mr. Baynes saw us off."
 - "November 22nd. To-day we sailed."
- "November 30th. Arrived at Teneriffe. Discharged cargo. Got donkey."

This last entry flashes a side-light on the loving, watchful care the young husband has over his little wife. Slightly lame, the result of an accident in her infancy, he feared she would be unable to take long rough walks through the Bush, and thus thought to make matters easier.

Full well we remember how gleefully she related her first day's adventures in Ak'wa town mounted on her white donkey. But we anticipate.

CHAPTER III.

HEATHEN LANDS.

Yet it grieves me too, Lord! that so many should wander, Should see nought before them but desolate night, That men should be walled in with darkness around them, When within and without there is nothing but light.

A ND now hand in hand our friends began work in earnest on the Dark Continent, settling in one of the native Cameroon villages, Ak'wa town. Hard laborious work it was toiling beneath the scorching rays of a tropical sun, yet they were ever borne up by the ruling passion, love for their Lord, and love for the souls He had died to redeem.

A numerous family Isabella gathered around her—fourteen boys and girls.

Those the missionaries sought to train, educate, humanize. Their grand endeavour was to lead them to the Saviour, and after they had been tested and tried, to send them out as soul-gatherers in their turn.

Their fathers and mothers had grown old in sin. Their natures were hardened, evil habits had them in their grip; but the young hearts and lives were more plastic under the missionary's hands, more easily moulded, and, as we have seen, their hope was that they might eventually form homes of their own, or in excursions up the river spread the sweet savour of Jesus' name.

Those who still cling to the idea that a missionary's sole work consists in preaching from under the shade of a huge umbrella, might have had their eyes opened by taking a peep at the mission home in Ak'wa town.

Mr. Lyall, with the boys under his care, taught them carpentry in all its branches, from sawing of planks to making articles of household furniture—brick-making—blacksmith's work—all of which went sadly against the grain; for, in these regions, as one has aptly remarked, "It is mostly all work for the women and play for the men."

Mrs. Lyall, with the girls under her charge, trained them in all manner of household work—sweeping, washing, baking, cutting out garments, sewing. Then when the morning's labour had closed, there was the visiting in the native quarters, tending the sick, classes for young people, meetings every evening for old and young alike, where the same sweet story was told, the "Story of Jesus and His love."

How touching it was when speaking to the children of the blessed home and the way there, one of the little Duallo boys looked up into her face, saying: "Oh, ma, what for you no come sooner and tell the good news? Our father, him die—our mother, too, go away into the dark, and never hear what you tell us to-day."

Her first shopping excursion in Ak'wa town, Mrs. Lyall dwelt on with great delight. Mounted on her white donkey, she set out, escorted by Lola, one of the mission boys, who carried on his head a calabash containing besides brass and copper rods, the current coin of the region, a pile of old preserved meat tims.

"What are you going to do with all this rubbish?" queried our friend.

"Rubbish!" said her husband laughingly, "you must learn to speak more respectfully of the staple on which our supplies depend. I expect our household

to dine for a week to come on the proceeds of the beef tins. Eggs, fowls, *mponga*—all will flow into your basket in exchange for them."

Thus admonished, Mrs. Lyall moved onward, Lola, the purse-bearer, bringing up the rear.

They had just entered the village street when Lola came running up alongside, saying:

"Ma, me like to tell peoples no need to go away in the dark. Home up there. Me no speak like Makara—white man. Me tell them in our tongue."

"Very well, Lola," said Mrs. Lyall, greatly encouraged, yet considerably startled when at the pitch of his voice the boy chanted forth his message.

Swarming around him, from hut and bush the natives poured, eager to hear the "new thing." Fearlessly Mrs. Lyall rode in amongst them, but to her dismay they disappeared as if by magic.

Innocently wondering what might be the cause of the panic, she rode up to one of their dwellings.

This made matters worse. Women and children fled at her approach, tumbling over each other in their wild haste, shrieking with terror as they sought a place of refuge. Had not the white monster come to devour them! It was only after Lola had protested that the poor donkey was perfectly harmless, and they had thrown a handful of mud at it, so making fetish and destroying the spell of witchcraft, that their fears were allayed and they could be prevailed on to come near.

Thoroughly at home now in the mission work, Mrs. Lyall sought to reach the regions beyond the station. Attended by a large watch-dog, she made her way to one of the bush farms, and there sought to sow the seed of the Word. Day after day she patiently wended her way through the bush-track, which was only a narrow footpath trodden down until it was somewhat like a shallow drain, and so narrow that you had difficulty in planting one foot before another, the dog often cowering behind her, dreading to face some wild beast of the jungle lurking near.

Spite of it all, this slight, fragile, sensitive, delicate woman persevered in her arduous undertaking, amply rewarded when she reached her journey's end by the welcome she received from the poor slave women, who soon learned to look upon her as their friend.

The sight of her emerging from the bush was a signal for them to rush off and don their apparel, which consisted of a calico skirt, a jacket, or even an apron or quilt.

Their reception-room was the Palaver-house. There, as time went on and her efforts began to tell, Mrs. Lyall regarded as, a sign of progress pictures pasted on the wall, a coloured quilt thrown over the table, and a chair planted in the middle of the floor for "Ma" to sit on.

One day as the teacher was setting forth to the dusky maidens the way of life, she wondered what impression she was making, and, turning to one of them, said—

"Do you ever pray to Jesus?"

"Pray to Jesus!" said the girl in a tone of surprise. Then she added plaintively, "Ma, me have no friend but Jesus. When me sleep, me ask Him to watch over me in the darkness. When me eat, me thank Him for the food, and when on the way it is Jesus me talk to."

No friend but Jesus! She was right. What was she amongst her own people but a beast of burden!

To hoe the corn, prepare the food, break the wood, carry the load; and when old age came prematurely on her, what was left for her but to creep into her lair like the wild beasts of the forest and die in the darkness.

But now what was it the white woman had left her people and her own land to come and tell her? He, the Lord of Light, loved her, had sent His Son to die instead of her, and now there was awaiting her a beautiful home in the spirit land. And even here when the star of hope gleamed before her there was light in the darkness. What wonder that she says, "I have no friend but Jesus!"

Those of us who were privileged to call Mrs. Lyall friend, and knew her tender winning ways, and saw how keenly she sympathized with all who were in distress, seeking to lighten the burden of the oppressed by sharing it with them, need not wonder that she found a place in the hearts of the "dear creatures," as she called them.

One old man, "George," a Christian who had stood the test of years, attached himself to the missionhouse as self-appointed guardian of the premises. One morning when Mrs. Lyall was actively employed in household work, a shadow darkened the window, and looking up she saw a Duallo negro standing scowling ominously.

Unpleasantly conscious that her husband was not within hail, she rose to her feet, concealing her fears as best she might, and asked why he had come there.

"Me want English shillings, not German moneys."

"Very well," said Mrs. Lyall calmly, remembering that on a previous occasion she had bought provisions from the man; "whenever an English vessel comes into harbour you shall have it."

"Me want it now, this very minute," said the intruder in loud, angry tones; and then bursting into a furious passion, the stream of angry words flowed impetuously along.

Still Mrs. Lyall stood her ground, never lifting her eyes from his face.

At this juncture she was considerably startled when she felt a hand laid on her arm, but was reassured when looking round she found old George at her side.

"Ma," said he earnestly, "that no good man—he speak bad words, words ma should not hear."

Yet still the angry flood rolled on, until Mrs. Lyall, advancing towards him, said firmly:

"This mission-house. No speak bad words here. Go;" and her hand pointing towards the door left no doubt of her meaning.

Then reiterating her command and enforcing her words with an imperative stamp of her foot, she said, "Go. Bad man no speak here. Bad man no stay here. This mission-house."

Her end was gained. The enemy was vanquished, and rushing out of the door he uttered threats both loud and deep.

Dear little woman! We think we see her confronting the savage negro, shrinking instinctively as woman will when danger is near, but unflinchingly standing at her post, "strong in the Lord and in the power of His might"—" My God is able to deliver," her fortress.

But she had not heard the last of her foe.

"Oh, ma," moaned the faithful old true-heart. "Bad man have big knife—knife drink your blood."

Vainly Mrs. Lyall told him of One who was her Shield, ever near to protect and deliver. George knew it all, but still was filled with gloomy forebodings. Evil threatened the mission-house.

Nor was he wrong. Like a bird of prey hovering over its quarry, the enemy bided his time, and then swooping down carried old George off in his clutches. Away up the river he sped, until, thinking himself safe from pursuit within the gloomy shades of the forest, he brandished his knife over the victim's head, crying ferociously, "When this has done its work where will you be then?"

"With Jesus," said the aged Christian calmly, not a shadow of fear dimming his eye.

This was too much for his tormentor. Something here he could not understand. What if the white woman's friend should make fetish over him.

Down the river now he flew. The boat could not speed fast enough, in such haste is he to reach the mission station and rid himself of George, fearful of the evil eye resting on him.

CHAPTER IV.

"THE MUFFLED OAR."

"And the night cometh chill with dew, O Father! let Thy light break through."

"The solemn shadow of Thy Cross Is better than the sun."

INSTANCES of faith and hope, such as we have recorded in the preceding chapter, were the well-springs which the Lord of the Way had planned for the refreshing of the pilgrims.

And they had need of them. Laid low again and again with malarial fever, they struggled bravely on, until at last they seemed to hear the voice which at first had given the command, "Son, daughter, go work to-day in My vineyard," reaching them with another voice, "Come ye apart and rest awhile."

They are just on the eve of starting, and when they have reached the mother country Mrs. Lyall hopes to gather to her heart a little stranger she has been fondly expecting.

But it was not to be. In her hour of greatest need, alone amongst strangers, with no hand of sister woman to lend her aid, the fond hopes are blighted.

"My Father wills it so," is enough for His child. The head is meekly bowed and the cross patiently borne.

Of their resting-time in old Scotland we will not now speak, but merely pause to insert a letter from Mr. Lyall to a friend written at this period:

"62 QUEEN STREET, "EDINBURGH, 22nd March 1881.

"MY DEAR MR. DAVIDSON,

"... I am indeed sorry that you should have been in Edinburgh—so near and not to see you.

"I fear should I not see you this time the probabilities are against our ever meeting again. Who knows?

"Where we are is most unhealthy, and life is not worth a day's purchase. The tombs of the white dead are all around, yet in Africa there is gold, aye, and gems!

"The country where we reside is most picturesque, beautiful, and highly productive, possessing a rich alluvial soil. You can pluck an orange every day of the year, so fertile are our trees; grand and noble mountains rise on every hand except seaward. Our Cameroon mountain is 13,000 feet in altitude, sometimes gleaming in a silver cap of snow. A long champaign of bush and dense forest and pasture lands stretch onwards to the mountains, which enclose us like an amphitheatre. Beyond the mountains again there are hundreds of square miles of lovely pasture, on which an abundance of animals of every variety roam. If a man is possessed of a good gun and is a good shot, he need never lack for food.

"My work out there of course is to seek to win the people to Christ. In pursuance of that I preach every Sunday morning at 7 a.m. in our church, seated for 600. Sunday school at 10.30 a.m. Public service again at 3 p.m. Classes in the evening, church generally filled. Every week-day morning prayer meeting at 5 a.m., every evening 7.30 p.m. Other towns and villages regularly visited Sunday and Saturday. I have only two paid preachers now, formerly I had four. An unfortunate tornado accident however killed my two best and other two

of my young men, making four in all killed and four much bruised.

"The king is a very quiet, thoughtful man, possessed of a bodyguard of thirty wives.

"Poor fellow! he came to see me that morning my young men carried me on board the mail—I was too enfeebled and near death to walk—and wept like a child when beside me. He asked again and again if I would be long in coming back.

"The people themselves are a savage race, with such serpentine hearts as can be found anywhere void of feeling. Yet out of these same degraded folks have come some of the noblest Christians—Christians of many years' standing.

"Oft in looking upon them in their upright, noble lives, I have thought, What has God wrought!

"... My dear wife, I am glad to say, stands the bad climate of Africa better than the writer. She joins me in kindest Christian love.—Yours most respectfully,

"D. LYALL.

"My address will always be,

"'Cameroons,

"West Africa.'"

How sadly prophetic the closing sentence! Even then "The sands of time were sinking," and the eternal day-dawn breaking on the heavenly horizon.

Yet, though fearlessly pressing forward in the path of danger and difficulty, we note again how tenderly David sought to smooth the way for the young wife at his side.

Spending the evening with a Christian lady, he instinctively felt, Here was the earthly friend Bella might lean on when the shadow fell across her path and she was left alone.

As they left the house he spoke to his wife of this lady, as one who would be likely to be friend her should he fall at his post. And he was right. In the coming years Mrs. Lyall might truly have said of her, "She was a succourer of many, and of me also."

But now, let us look again to the Cameroons, where weary hearts await our friends' return. At last, when the news was brought that the missionary and his wife were near at hand, great was the jubilation in the settlement. As soon as their feet touched the land they were seized and mounted shoulder-high, their friends marching before them singing,

"Whosoever heareth, shout, shout the sound, Spread the joyful tidings all the world around."

Mrs. Lyall, as you may imagine, was thankful when she reached *terra firma* in safety.

The ordeal to her was not over yet, however, for one and another seized her in their arms, and testified their joy by wheeling round and round the room with her.

And again the work began. Patiently, prayerfully sowing the seed, the reaping-time would come by and by. Fervent were the prayers that the Lord would own and bless His Word; and at times even as they prayed the answer came.

"While they are yet speaking I will hear," saith the Lord.

With glistening eyes Mrs. Lyall told us of a girl whose name we have forgot, but whom we shall call Ogan, running to her one day with a beaming face as if she had good news to impart.

"Well, Ogan," said her friend, "what have you got to tell me to-day?"

"Oh, ma," said the girl in broken accents, "me happy, me so happy."

"What has made you so happy, Ogan?" said Mrs. Lyall sympathetically. "Have you got a good mark at school?"

"Notthat, not that; far better than that. Akanaim, she reading from God's book, and my heart felt dark, so dark. The Lord He never love Ogan, she so bad. Then Akanaim she read, 'I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.' And me say, 'What that mean?' and Akanaim she say, 'The Lord Jesus wants bad people to come to Him to be made good.' Then the darkness all go away out of Ogan's heart, for she feels God loves her. And now me happy, oh so happy."

Thus the light shone into the heart of Afric's darkeyed maiden, and as Mrs. Lyall related the incident we saw the reflected radiance shining on her face. Truly in blessing others she had herself been blessed.

But it is not always sunshine in this sorrowful world of ours. Only a few short months had our friends been at work after their return to the station when shadows gathered around their path. The bolt fell out of a cloudless sky. The angel of Death o'ershadowed the home, and when he departed Mrs. Lyall stood alone.

We are indebted to the Rev. J. Fuller, a fellow-missionary with Mr. Lyall, for the following account of the closing days of our friend's life.

It seems that on his return to the Cameroons after his furlough, he found the mission premises in great need of repair, and personally engaged in the work, instructing the natives as he did so. But in preparing wood for the purpose, he imprudently exposed himself to the malarial miasma arising from the mango swamps, and soon was stricken down with fever.

Mr. Fuller, visiting them, found Mr. Lyall very ill, and Mrs. Lyall in a very delicate state of health.

He persuaded them to return with him to his station, Mortonville, four miles up the river, hoping the change might be beneficial to them. Medical aid was called in, and it was hoped the means used might be blessed and the life spared. But it was not to be. The Father had willed it otherwise, and in a week after the seizure the spirit was called away to be "Forever with the Lord."

He died October 8th, 1882.

"He was much beloved by the people," adds Mr. Fuller, "and would have been very useful, as he had gained their love and interest, as seen by the sorrow manifested by all around. He was a truly devoted man, and one who had at heart the work before him."

The following tribute to Mr. Lyall's memory is from the pen of Mr. A. H. Baynes, Secretary to the Baptist Missionary Society:—

"My knowledge of Mr. Lyall was entirely confined to intercourse in England. But I should be glad of the opportunity of bearing loving testimony to his fine enthusiasm and transparent character. I had many opportunities of intercourse with him, and I was greatly struck with his singleness of purpose and intense desire in any and every way to be of use to the people of Africa. His whole heart was in his work, and in my judgment he was one of the finest missionary spirits I have encountered. His early death was a sad loss, but, as in so many cases, probably his ripeness of character and his consecration of life fitted him more than others for higher service.

"He has left behind a beautiful record of consecrated earnestness and unselfish devotion to the interests of the African people.

"I shall always cherish his memory with thankfulness, and pray that men of like spirit may be raised up to carry on the work he loved so well, and for which he toiled so faithfully."

The last sad offices are rendered to the loved one, and over his resting-place the sorrowing widow inscribed:

"In sacred memory of my dearly beloved husband, David Lyall, Missionary, who fell asleep in Jesus at Cameroons, 8th October 1882. He was born again at the age of 15, and his motto throughout life was, 'For me to live is Christ.' 'Those who sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him.'"

And now it was night indeed with poor Bella! She prayed, oh how she had prayed that the life of her beloved husband might be spared, but "the hollow sky seemed dim with silentness."

"Oh, if my faith had been stronger, He might have granted my request," she cried.

She knows better now. The Lord had indeed

granted her request, and given her beloved life at His right hand—life for evermore.

But meantime it seemed as if the Lord had no need of her. And so the home is broken up, the last farewells are spoken, the solitary journey home is taken.

Looking back through the vista of the years, one solitary ray lightened the gloom.

On the homeward way she spent a night in the home of the late Mrs. Sutherland, Duke Town, Old Calabar. She had entered into rest, but had left behind her a message of comfort to our afflicted sister.

In a card on the wall over the pillow where her head reclined were written lines of faith and hope, which awoke responsive chords in the heart of the weary-worn stranger.

> "Did you wonder I so calmly Trod the valley of the shade? Oh! but Jesus' love illumined Every dark and fearful glade.

"There is work still waiting for you,
So you must not idly stand:
Do it now while life remaineth,
You shall rest in Jesus' land.

"When that work is all completed, He will gently call you home: Oh the rapture of that meeting! Oh the joy to see you come!"

Yes, the Lord might have need of her still. She might serve Him, although not on the high places of the field.

Back in the old country she was preparing to start again as a dressmaker, when a kind friend came to her aid.

> "When the night is darkest He gives the morn, When the famine is sorest, the wine and corn."

Her earthly star of hope had set, but the Sun of Righteousness with healing beam shed His light around her. "In His light she saw light"—light for the present, light on her future path.

With indomitable courage, bracing herself for renewed effort, she set about preparing herself for again taking up work in the foreign field.

From the first she had felt her education defective, so now she seeks to strengthen the weak places in her armour by again applying herself to study.

As an outcome of her tender, sympathetic nature,

she longed to minister not only to the souls of the heathen, but to alleviate physical suffering. To this end she applied herself to the study of medicine.

We quote from one of her letters written at this time:

"I am expecting to get to China in August to labour for Christ. . . . I am still attending my medical classes. The Lord has helped me marvellously with all my hard study, and I know He will not fail me in learning the Chinese language, although it is very difficult. I must say I would rather have gone to dear old Africa, but the Lord may have need of me in China. It is so good of Him to allow such a very unworthy creature to carry His blessed gospel to the heathen."

Her prayer was granted. The door was opened for her, not to work in China, but in "dear old Africa."

In 1884 the Mission Board of the United Presbyterian Church appointed her to work as one of their agents in Duke Town, Old Calabar, West Africa.

Strange to think that here she gathered up the broken threads of her life, picking up the work where she laid it down, in the very home where the Lord the Comforter sent her the sweet message of healing. For it was in "Orange Grove," where that devoted servant of God, Mrs. Sutherland, lived and laboured, that Mrs. Lyall with her associates, Miss M'Phun, and eventually Miss Hogg, were established.

And now we find her at the old work—soul-gathering. To educate, to purify, to civilize; this the human side of the work. And the Divine—ah! with her dear Lord nothing was impossible. Out of the darkness He could bring light; to the sin-sick soul He could bring healing; nay, even to the dead He could bring life.

Mrs. Lyall's pen will now give an account of the daily work which came to her hand in Old Calabar.

"Iköröfiön, Old Calabar, August 18th, 1886.

"MY DEAR MISS H.,-

"Although I have been long in writing, you have often been in my thoughts, and I have not forgot you in prayer.

"Nearly seventeen months have elapsed since I came to Old Calabar, and I get to love the work more and more. There are eager welcomes on every hand.

Nearly all the people like us to visit them, and not a few seem eager to hear about 'God and His fashion,' as they would say.

"I spend all the forenoon in the dispensary, meeting the sick and giving out medicine. The people come long distances for Makara Ibök—white man's medicine.

"One poor creature was brought to the mission 'full of sores' like Lazarus. He was not able to lift his hand, nor even to move his body in any way. It was a loathsome disease, and none of the people would touch him. I covered my hands with plantain leaves, and my companion Miss Hogg did the same. We then rolled him on to one side, washed it, spread a clean leaf, and turned him over and bathed the other. The smell was almost unbearable. Our children would not even feed him, so that also fell to my share. But oh how grateful he was, and said if ever he got better he would do plenty of work for me! He lived about a month in this state and was very penitent, but I could not say he trusted in the Saviour. This is a sample of the work that frequently falls to our hand in Africa.

"I am staying at the above station—Iköröfion—until I get a little stronger. I was feeling so done up when I came a fortnight ago, but am now much better.

"This is a pretty place, situated on a hill looking down to the river. The country is densely wooded, and the profusion of flowers is something wonderful.

"We purpose $(D_{\bullet}V_{\cdot})$ going a trip in the little mission steamer in October. . . . I have been one hundred miles up the river, and it was quite a treat. The banks are thickly populated, and the steamer seems a great wonder to the people. All the chiefs seem anxious to have missionaries. How wonderfully the way is opening up for the gospel!

"On Sunday I have a nice class of young men numbering about twenty. Then we meet on the Monday for catechism, and they would so like if I could spare another evening for geography, but every evening is taken up with meetings except Wednesday. Then I try to take up my writing.

"There was a market of fattened women here last week. We saw a number pass. Their dress consists of about six pieces of cloth, all colours. One piece is twisted twice round the loins, the others hanging around attached to the centre one. A head ornament, shaped like a horn, is stuck amongst the short-plaited hair in front; anklets to the knees, covered with little bells that jingled with every movement.

"The women when fattening must sit about two years in a dark place doing nothing but eating food, which consists of vegetables and oil. If she will not eat enough she is properly flogged! When they are fat they are ready for marriage, but do not go to their homes until they are shown off at the market.

"One old lady who comes very regularly to our church at Duke Town wears about twenty rings on her fingers, and a very small hat covered with all the flowers, ribbons, and brooches she can get hold of. Her dress and jacket are of a thin white material, fastened with red belt and brass buckle. When she wants to spit, she'll rise, go through the church until she reaches the door, her servant walking behind with umbrella and tin pitcher. Sometimes she will rise three or four times during the service.

"Now I should like if you would write and let me

know about yourselves and your work. Love to your sisters and yourself.

"From yours most affectionately,

I. D. LYALL"

A friend who saw " the little medicine woman " at work amongst the sick in Old Calabar writes:—

"I first saw Mrs. Lyall at Old Calabar in 1889, and I can never forget our first meeting. She was stooping over a little African lad at death's door from dysentery, and the gentle tones of her voice, with the tender manner in which she felt the fevered brow and arranged the blanket, were a sight that spoke volumes to me. That was my first view of missionary work in Africa."

At this point in her career Mrs. Lyall had many fellow-workers to encourage her in her labours. The ground had been occupied for nearly half a century; and notably amongst the pioneers were the earnest-spirited Waddell, Goldie, Edgerley, with the veteran William Anderson, who has spent upwards of fifty years labouring for Christ in the mission field.

The devoted band had been sowing the seed in weariness, oft in pain and suffering. Sometimes it seemed as if all had been in vain. The miasma of superstition and vice, rising like the mist from their river, paralyzed every effort, spreading around darkness and death.

With a feeling of dread the approach of an Ikpo or devil-making was regarded, for with those feasts some of their saddest experiences in the mission field were associated.

A clamour of gongs booming, bells clashing, trumpets blaring, drums beating, signalled the beginning of a scene of the wildest revelry. One friend tells how one day when the uproar was at its height the storm broke loose—a storm lashed into fury by the fierce vindictive passion of a cruel, ungoverned nature. Before it fell the young innocent wife and her companion. A little slave girl escaped with life, but so maimed that ever after the finger of scorn would be pointed at her as an evil-doer.

Then again, seeking to enter the yard of a chief, Mrs. Lyall was met by the head-wife, who motioned her away, saying, "No, ma, you no come in here. You too much pity. Pity kill you when you see 'Ikero.'"

Poor "Ikero!" With no thought of wrong-doing, she had unwittingly offended her husband, and the cruel lash had done its work.

As Mrs. Lyall gazed on the mangled form of the bright young Christian, her heart was well-nigh broken. With loving hand she strove to soothe, to bathe, to alleviate by every means in her power the stinging pain, but the wounded spirit who could heal?

Surely the dark places of the earth are full of the habitations of cruelty.

Must they remain so? Is it that angels are to come floating down on snowy pinions, and with wondrous song carol forth the glad tidings of salvation? Nay, our Lord has not willed it so. It is the young people of to-day who are to be the missionaries of the future. What is the cry from the Dark Continent? "Men are falling. Fill up the ranks!" Shoulder to shoulder we advance on the foe. The post of danger is the post of honour on earth's battlefields, is it not? Who will take their stand on the high places of the field? Who will respond to the

"Voice of pleading, choked with tears, The call of human hopes and fears, The Macedonian cry to Paul!"

with "Here am I, send me?"

We have seen how nobly Isa Renwick, the little maid of the Merse, responded to the appeal from the "regions beyond." We read much in these days of circumstances moulding character; but to the eye of sense there was nothing in Bella's surroundings to make her what she became. Yet the privations of her lot were fitting her for the rough places of the way, and it was in the school of disappointment and trial she learned the lessons of patience, meekness, and devotion to others.

One marked feature in her Christian character was her child-like reliance on her heavenly Father's love and care. It seemed almost as if the lack of an earthly father's protecting hand threw her into closer communion with her Father in Christ Jesus; and the cares, worries, or even petty annoyances which would naturally have been breathed into the ear of a sympathetic parent, were "taken to the Lord in prayer."

"Well do I remember the time," writes a friend, "when, after telling her of some perplexity, she said, 'Oh, darling, come and we will tell it to the Lord.' Kneeling together she told all in just such a way as I would have told it to my mother. It was a revelation to me. Taught by loving parents, I had given myself to Jesus in early years, but never till then had I realized how real and personal a Friend He could be to those who loved Him."

With her, prayer was just speaking to God—so natural was it, so utterly free from all formality.

"Forgive me, Lord," she might have said,

"Forgive me, if too close I lean My human heart on Thee."

On one occasion, when telling us of the house boys and their little prayer-meetings, we said to her:

"Have you ever heard them pray?"

"Oh yes, dear," she replied; "have I never told you that story? Well, one evening I was ailing and unable to go to the prayer-meeting. The boys on their return came into my room, and, thinking they came to enquire for me, I told them how I was, and then

wished them good-night. But they still lingered, and at last one little fellow said:

"'Ma, will you tell us how you found the Lord?'

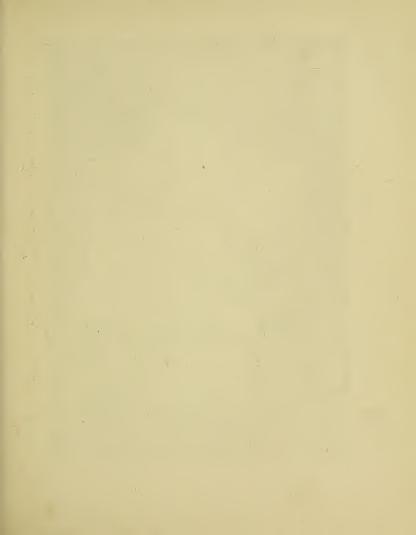
"'Oh yes, dears,' I said; 'I will gladly tell you that; sit down beside me.'

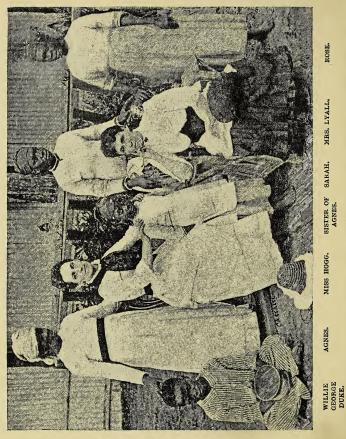
"So they all squatted on the ground around me, and I told them as simply as I could how the Lord revealed Himself to me. At last I said, 'I have spoken of myself long enough. We will now speak to God.' So one and another of us led in prayer, Miss Hogg, myself, and a house-servant, who was a woman of colour and a Christian. I did not think of asking the boys to join, but was so touched when the little fellows took up the strain."

Just in the gloaming it was when Mrs. Lyall told the tale, and we remember so well saying, "We too would like to hear how you found the Lord."

"I shall willingly tell it you," she said in her own gentle, plaintive accents. And thus it was we heard the story of her conversion which we have narrated in a previous page.

Miss Hogg, we think, so happily strikes the keynote of our dear friend's life when she says: "Putting





AGNES.

MISS HOGG.

ROSE.

Christ first, she did what she could to make every one see Him with her eyes."

From this friend, too, we learn that, loving and beloved, our leal-hearted little woman earned for herself in Calabar the new name of Nwan Ima, the Woman of Love.

We are indebted to Miss Hogg, who has been home on furlough from Old Calabar during the past year, for the following interesting narrative of Mrs. Lyall's life when associated with her at Orange Grove, Duke Town:

"I made Mrs. Lyall's acquaintance when she was a young widow. We attended together nurses' classes at the Edinburgh Royal Infirmary. Afterwards I visited her in the Glasgow Medical Mission, where she ministered to the poorest and most degraded, and got instruction that subsequently proved very valuable. She told me she felt drawn to go to Old Calabar as a missionary, seeing she could not return to Cameroons, where she had suffered so much. Her whole demeanour told even strangers how deeply her sorrow had left its mark. In 1884 she offered her services, and was accepted

by the United Presbyterian Mission Board as an agent to Old Calabar.

"For those who may not be familiar with the history of this mission, it is not amiss to give its antecedents in a few sentences. The idea of such a mission originated in Jamaica after the slave emancipation.

"Old Calabar was one of the chief seats of the slave trade, and the inland regions had been harried, and multitudes carried off. It was natural therefore that the thoughts of missionaries and freedmen should turn to West Africa, and Old Calabar was chosen as their thanksgiving ground. 'The most uncivilized part of Africa ever I was in,' it was termed by one who visited it in 1842. In 1846, under the leadership of the Rev. Hope M. Waddell, the mission started. All the missionaries, European and coloured, went from Jamaica, so were in great measure acclimatized to tropical suns. Since that date, a band of God's devoted servants have plodded on, and much sickness, many deaths, have only stirred those remaining to more zeal and patience. Were our friend of 1842 to take a trip to Old Calabar now, the change would surprise him greatly, for God's Spirit has been working there. To my great joy, Mrs. Lyall was sent to Duke Town, where I was already stationed.

"The details of her arrival at our 'Haven under the hill' are fresh in my memory. I was alone in the Zenana House, and often and anxiously I scanned 'Seven Fathoms' Point,' for there the first glimpse of the approaching steamer is got. On a Sabbath afternoon, brilliantly sunny, the air and 'bush' freshened by a recent tornado, the mail-gun fired at the 'Point.' When making our way down the Mission Hill to the river-side, it was subject for congratulation that she was going to see Old Calabar at its very best. How we waved our handkerchiefs, and even our umbrellas from our boat! How gladly we welcomed her! It was our communion Sabbath also: altogether a peaceful and peace-giving time. She thought it was such a beautiful beginning, and sat with her hand clasped in mine, enjoying the service thoroughly.

"With the first hand-shake and kindly smile, the people knew they had found a friend who would give them sympathy and love from a full store. Among the more intimate of our native friends she was called Nwan Ima (woman of love).

"I can only outline her work. To give a clear idea of her devotedness is impossible. God's Spirit guided her, and shone out in simple actions and in her affection in our home. All her longings were poured out at our family altar. Her experiences as a child of God were told in such a child-like, simple way, that our house boys, drawn on by what she said, began a little prayer-meeting of their own, so as to tell their wants to their Father in heaven, and get answers as she did. The boys of the other mission-houses eventually joined these lads, who met for prayer in the cool of the evening on the verandah of the Zenana House, so the place of meeting was changed. This meeting still prospers, and most of its members are in communion with the church. She taught the English class in Sabbath school. The average attendance was eighteen, and she said they were further advanced in Bible knowledge than any class she ever taught in Scotland.

"Her forenoon was spent in the dispensary. In

this way she came in contact with the people from the first. Ekpri ñwan ibök (the little medicine woman) soon became a power among them.

"Her pitifulness for the sick of body or soul was her strong point. No needy one ever went empty away. It required no effort for her to tell what Christ had done and suffered. It was the outcome of her confident loving relation to God. In a letter written after her return home she says: 'When the news got abroad that I was to go home, crowds came to get prescriptions, written out as if I were likely to know what diseases they were to be attacked by. Some said: "Ma; we all go die before you come back."'

"In her study of the language she was most persevering, and although she never attained great fluency of speech, her Efik was understood without difficulty. Our afternoons we nearly always spent together in the harems, where we pinned up A B C cards, and tried to interest our pupils in every conceivable way. Often they were playful and curious. They begged us to unplait our hair, and then they gathered round and stroked it. They said it was like srik (silk).

Sometimes she carried a basket with medical requisites, and one day a syringe drew attention. What was its use? was the question. Water was brought at our request, and when a stream was squirted on a few uninterested ones, squatted in the farther corner of the yard, and they shrieked and jumped about in surprise, how she enjoyed the joke! Their usual exclamation about anything astonishing was Makara! (the white people!), and our dress, or our stories about the white man's wonderful country, often elicited it.

"Another day a friend exhibited her false teeth in a yard, and with eyes big with wonder they said it was witchcraft. When they saw the teeth popped in and out at will, and were told their purpose—that of mastication—was legitimate, their merriment was uproarious. I tell you these stories, simply to show the fund of humour and enjoyment of the ludicrous Mrs. Lyall had. She laughed heartily over such scenes as the foregoing, and often referred to them. Usually we taught a hymn in each harem, and sang it. 'Jesus, Lover of my soul,' was a favourite. With the greatest reluctance she left any

yard without telling them the story of the Cross. If she had no opportunity of giving her Master's message, she grieved over the unprofitableness of her visit. The favourite wife of one chief tried to keep the others quiet at this stage, and showed us great kindness throughout. Her husband died, and she went back to live at her own village. She joined the adherents' class there, and when the native pastor questioned her, and wanted to know how she, a wife in a harem, got her desire to be a Christian, she told him she had heard the good tidings at the white Ma's meeting. So far I have given you the sunny side of these afternoon visits in Duke Town. There is another side, dark enough certainly, and our friend got well acquainted with it.

"Sometimes what she saw of the fattening custom made her ponder on the darkness as she walked slowly up the Mission Hill of an evening. Or it might be the boiling oil ordeal that saddened her afternoon. A woman, charged with wrong-doing, dips her hands into a pot of boiling oil as proof of guilt or innocence. If her hands are burned, she is treated with scant sympathy by all.

"In such a case Nwan Ima came to the rescue, lavishing her pity and medical skill on their sinner. Or it might be a flogged wife—one mass of bruises and whip-cuts—that roused her indignation. Once her spirited denunciation of such doings caused a Calabar husband to keep out of her way for months. She learned by experience that 'the dark places of the earth are full of the habitations of cruelty.' Having entered on a work where noble women had spent their strength, she reaped the benefit of their patient sowing and prayerfulness.

"In a letter she says: 'My Sunday morning meetings in the town have been well attended, and many of the women are sighing after better things.' One of these meetings to which she refers was begun at the request of a wife in a harem, who had gone to the mission-school as a girl, and had known the late Mrs. Anderson and Mrs. Sutherland. She begged us to begin a meeting on Sabbath morning, as she and some others wanted to know more about Divine things, and were not allowed to go to church. Till Mrs. Lyall left Old Calabar this meeting continued. As the result, this woman left her husband.

"The following is an extract, taken from notes at a Zenana Conference at Duke Town, in reference to her: 'A case of persecution was mentioned. A chief's wife, whose heart God had touched, left the harem, and was received into the church by baptism. Her husband, by proclamation, has forbidden all communication with her, daring any one to shake hands with her, and threatening to seize and chain her.' He ultimately chained her, but she was freed by law, as he had never given her the token of marriage—a box with cloth in it. One might multiply such cases, but 'God will count' the women she influenced to leave all and follow Christ.

"This I can say, that not a few are able to tell how Ma Lyall pleaded and prayed with them, and led the way Heavenward. Over thirty girls attended her sewing-class. In writing of them, she says: 'Some of them finished a dress each, others made underclothing, and the little ones patched bed-covers.'

"During the fifteen months we lived together, she was indefatigable in the dispensary, in visiting, class-teaching, and the home, as I have tried to make evident. She was associated with Miss M'Phun

(now Mrs. Beedie) during the latter part of her time.

"At length a visit to Scotland became necessary on account of ill-health. Then news reached Old Calabar of continued want of strength. We hoped against hope, but her doctor forbade her return to such a warm climate. It was then agreed by our Old Calabar Zenana Committee to record the sincere regret of both natives and Europeans that the illness of Mrs. Lyall prevented her return.

"On leaving for my second furlough, I got many kind messages to convey to her; but they were too late: she was at home with her Father when I reached Scotland.

"In Old Calabar, where her life was a daily, hourly doing of her Lord's command, she is sincerely mourned, and still lives in the hearts of those she helped."

CHAPTER V.

ANCHORED.

"His will be done,
Who seeth not as man, whose way
Is not as ours! 'Tis well with thee!
Nor anxious doubt, nor dark dismay
Disquieted thy closing day,
But ever more thy soul could say,
'My Father careth still for me.'"

THE Pillar of cloud moved onward, and guided our friend to the homeland. Fired with a holy enthusiasm, whatever her hand found to do she did it with all her might, working early and late, ever serving the Lord Christ. We have seen her at work in the dispensary at Orange Grove, starting in the early morning hours, where crowds of patients awaited her. There she prescribed and dispensed medicine for the several cases, her sole assistant a black boy. Then snatching a meal at 8 a.m., she worked on until 1 p.m., when she closed the dispensary and hurried down to the town, visiting and teaching in the homes of the people.

Then again, we find her ministering so lovingly at the sick-beds of her own country-women, she the sole doctor and nurse they could procure.

Exhausted mentally and physically with three years of such service in Old Calabar, she gladly took advantage of the resting-time provided for her. But on the voyage home she was not idle. Even here the Master had provided work for her. A sister missionary, sick unto death, was committed to her care.

Writing of her companion in connection with the work of the mission, she says: "Our dear friend Mrs. Beedie kept me supplied with Bible pictures, which were a great assistance at the meetings. She never was able for much work, but had always a kind word for everybody, and her presence will be greatly missed in Duke Town."

The journey for the invalid was short, very short. Down into the valley of the shadow, Mrs. Lyall tended her friend. But a few days, and the mother and babes were laid to rest in the bosom of the deep.

The bracing breezes of her native land did not renew our friend's strength, and at the close of her year's furlough she was not able to resume work in Old Calabar. Praying to be retained on the Zenana staff, she declined receiving further emolument from the Mission Board, and prosecuted her medical studies at her own charges.

Now in Edinburgh, now in Glasgow, and again in London she attended lectures on Anatomy, Physiology, and directed special attention to the diseases of women and children.

While in Calabar her success in treating difficult medical cases she attributed as direct answers to prayer; but indeed, as we have seen, every detail of her daily life was made a subject of prayer, from the making of a dress up to her dealing with poor, suffering humanity.

In the intervals of study she visited her friends in the country, her affections clinging around the spot where, in the first ardour of her love to her Saviour, she had sought to spread the sweet savour of His name. Writing of Greenlaw, she says: "It is a dear little spot to me, and will always remain sacred in my memory."

It was while residing with an aunt at Fogorig,

a farm in the neighbourhood of Greenlaw, that we were privileged to make her acquaintance; and a precious privilege it was! So clearly did she reflect the image of her dear Lord and Saviour, that whenever and wherever you met her it seemed as if she had just come from the presence of the King. How she loved to talk of Him, and to tell of His gracious dealings with her! So lovingly and tenderly did she press His claims on those around, that not even the most sensitive could resist her earnest pleading.

"Some few years ago," writes one who bears testimony to the beauty of her Christian character, "it was my privilege to make the acquaintance of the late Mrs. Lyall, at that time home on furlough from her beloved mission-work in Africa. I shall not soon forget her interest in the heathen and her missionary enthusiasm, her love to Jesus and her loyalty to His truth. . . . Not strong in body, yet how active in seeking to help others; how willing and anxious to cheer and benefit all with whom she came into contact! How she sought to stir up God's children to a sense of their responsi-

bility regarding the regions beyond! and not a few have been led to devote their lives to Foreign Mission work through her influence and prayer."

In those country visits we have referred to, she strove to stir up an interest in missions by addressing, or rather, as she put it, having little talks in cottage meetings and Sunday schools. In the autumn of 1890 we had the pleasure of hearing her address a cottage meeting on our farm. Very simply, very earnestly, did she tell what the Lord had done in her and for her; and then pleading the cause of the poor African, she asked would no girl present give herself to the work.

Very telling were her words when we thought of what she had been—a daughter of the people, with no hand to help her, struggling against seemingly overwhelming difficulties. Many have reached the goal of their hopes, sustained and encouraged along the rugged way by the sympathy of dear ones who were in close touch with their aspirations. But at the starting-point poor Bella stood alone. Yet, as she struggled onwards, patiently overcoming difficulties at every turning-point, a friend

stood waiting her, provided by the Lord of the Way.

The year 1891 still found her in the old country preparing herself for more efficient work on the Dark Continent. Being still in a delicate state of health, her medical advisers warned her against returning to Old Calabar, but she hoped to find a sphere of labour in South Africa. Her wishes were about to be realized when the summons came for her to enter into the joy of her Lord.

Prostrated under a serious illness at the Mission Training Home in Glasgow, every remedy was tried for her relief, seemingly only to result in failure. A friend called for her at this crisis, prayed with her, and gave her this text to lean on: "The prayer of faith shall save the sick." "I laid hold of it very waveringly," writes our friend, "but in the course of the evening a whisper in my soul said, 'Prayer is answered for you.' I believed; and then the Lord proved Himself to be the Hearer and the Answerer of prayer." "Now I am trusting Him," she adds, "for a perfect recovery if He will be glorified through it." "The doctor says I must be very careful," we find

her writing again, "as I may never be quite strong. However, it is well whichever way it turns. The Lord has been very near, and some have got blessing."

"She dwelt with the King for His work," and even when standing on the brink of the River, "while we were talking about Jesus," she sweetly said, "a soul was gathered into the kingdom."

A friend writing of her says so truly: "God always gave her something to do for Him, as she was a willing messenger waiting at His feet."

In the midst of weakness and pain she longs to be engaged in active service once more, and touchingly remarks: "I am longing to be at work for Him again. . . . It is much easier to work for Him than to suffer." Then, as the Lord's will is accomplished in her, we hear the child-like spirit breathing forth: "It is sweet to suffer when it brings Him nearer. I can say with David, 'It is good for me that I have been afflicted.' It helps to brush off all the rough bits."

And now in the gloaming hour it seems almost as if a wave of home sickness had broken over her.

But little of home love and home life had she known, yet now her heart wakes up and cries for it, and in the hour of her need she turns to the friend we have often referred to in those pages.

The rough bit of the way the Father makes smooth for His child, her desire is granted, and the evening of her life is spent with the friend she loved so well.

Still at work, we see her spending her afternoons in the garden with her books, preparing for an examination in Physiology; but again the warning voice is heard, and she knows if life is to be prolonged she must submit to a surgical operation.

With this end in view she repaired to a private ward in Chalmers Hospital, Edinburgh.

We hear from her friend "that she did not seem to apprehend a fatal result. Death was not much in her thoughts. The Second Advent was more in her mind, which she believed was not far distant, but the Lord called her to meet Him by the way of the dark valley." Her friend Miss Adam, convener of the Ladies' Zenana Committee, writes:

"I saw Mrs. Lyall within an hour of the operation.

She was sweet, calm, and hopeful, anxious to live and work for her Redeemer, yet ready to go if it was His will. She asked me to telegraph to several friends, 'who were praying ones,' that they might remember her before God during this crisis in her life. We had prayer together, and then I left her calm in her Heavenly Father's care, and waiting on His will."

So wide-spread was the interest excited in our dear friend's critical state, and so sympathetic were the friends who gathered around her at this time, that the porteress remarked to one who called and enquired for her: "Surely that lady must be greatly thought of, so many people have been calling to ask for her to-day."

A pencilled note, probably the last she wrote, speaks of her unwavering faith:

"My own dearest friend," she writes, "there is no difference yet. The answer is delayed—must be for some wise purpose. Now, my dear, do not worry over me. I am entirely in my Father's hands, and feel it will be all right. Kindly send my little clock when Annie comes."

Little did the dear one think that in five short days time's sun for her would set, and the glorious eternal dawn arise.

We are indebted to her friend Mrs. C. for the touching account of her closing hours.

Mrs. Duncan, who had known and loved Mrs. Lyall for many years, was the only personal friend who saw her after the operation before she became unconscious. She spent an hour and a half with her in the afternoon shortly before the end.

Mrs. Lyall did not observe her friend was beside her, until Mrs. D. said, "Do you know me?"

"Know you? Yes," she replied; "but I had to take a second look." Alas, her eyes were growing dim in death!

Mrs. Lyall then requested the nurse to leave, that she might be alone with her friend.

"Can I do anything for you?" Mrs. D. enquired.

Mrs. Lyall replied by clasping her hands, looking upward, and exclaiming: "I want nothing but Thine own self, Lord Jesus! That has been my prayer all night."

"Is Jesus precious to you?" said her friend.

Again clasping her hands and looking upward, she exclaimed: "Yes, precious. Oh, how precious!"

"You will soon be with Him, and see Him face to face."

Mrs. Lyall, continuing in the same attitude, assented "Yes! yes!"

She then spoke of the sufferings of the night—so great she felt she could not live through such another.

Again the longing came over her to join her loved friend in her quiet retreat. But the Lord had need of her now in the

> "Bright and glorious home Away in the Heavens high."

Not alone, nor yet with strangers only around, did she close her eyes on earth, but one who had rendered her loving service in a previous illness stood beside her. Once when the familiar voice broke on her ear a shadowy smile seemed to quiver on her face; but ere the end came she was wrapped in unconsciousness, until at last the spirit, freed from earthly bonds, entered into the joy of her Lord. And so the home she had longed for was found at last. "Death may hide, but it cannot divide,
Thou art only on Christ's other side;
Thou art with Christ, and Christ is with me,
And in Christ united still are we."

Many friends followed the remains of our loved one to the Grange Cemetery—the Rev. Mr. Bowie, of West Port Church, a friend of Mr. Lyall's, conducting the service at the Hospital, while the late Rev. Principal Cairns offered up prayer at the grave.

Those who gathered near as chief mourners were: Dr. Rattray, of Coral Bank, Perthshire, brother of her valued and much loved friend, Mrs. Chapman; Rev. Principal Cairns, Rev. Mr. Bowie, Rev. Mr. Anderson (Old Calabar), Mr. Duncan, Mr. Charles, Mr. Brown, Mr. Copplestone.

Many ladies were among the mourners, while a deputation from the Ladies' Zenana Conference Committee attended the service held in the Hospital, but regretted deeply that they could not pay the last tribute of respect to their friend by accompanying the remains to the cemetery.

Thus was our little Berwickshire maiden beloved in life and honoured in death.

"She being dead yet speaketh;" and were our ears not dulled with earth's million voices little difficulty would we have in hearing her pleading tones: "The harvest is plenteous, the labourers are few. Who will take up the work? The Lord's little ones are perishing yonder for one drop of water from the Fountain of Life. Will you take the cup and hand it to them?" "Give and it shall be given you, good measure pressed down and running over."

If in the heart of one of our readers the desire arises to follow in the footsteps of this lowly, loving disciple, then One Record of a Consecrated Life has not been written in vain.

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